

Two GIs die in alcohol-related accidents

By KEVIN DOUGHERTY

Stars and Stripes

Two U.S. Army soldiers — one from Darmstadt, the other from Hanau — died last week in alcohol-related accidents, prompting the commander of U.S. Army Europe to, once again, remind his charges of the dangers of excessive drinking.

The soldiers "didn't own the edge, they went over it," Gen. B.B. Bell wrote in a message posted Monday on the USAREUR Web site.

"These tragedies, together with the bad incidents and 'near misses' we have seen in the past few months, represent a very se-

rious problem — one that demands our immediate, collective attention," Bell stated.

The Darmstadt soldier was identified Tuesday as Pvt. Craig L. Young, of the 32nd Signal Battalion. Young, 24, was struck and killed by a car on the night of Nov. 22, moments after leaving a bar in Darmstadt.

On Nov. 23, Sgt. 1st Class Martin Pena of Hanau died of injuries he sustained on Nov. 13, when he tumbled down a flight of stairs inside a Frankfurt restaurant. His age was unavailable.

Last month, after a rash of motorcycle accidents over several months that included five fatalities, the 1st Armored Division

grounded all of its licensed motorcycle riders, pending additional training. At the time, Bell was urging commanders to "take any action" to prevent further accidents.

According to German police, Young was struck as he attempted to cross a Darmstadt street immediately after leaving a nightclub. The driver of the car, a 27-year-old German, was not drunk at the time of the incident, police said.

Young was taken to a German hospital where he died soon afterward.

Pena, who is assigned to the 502nd Engineer Company, suffered a head injury when he fell earlier this month. At the time

of the incident, he was with a fellow soldier in Sachsenhausen, a section of Frankfurt. The Army didn't provide details of the deaths until Tuesday.

A memorial service is planned for Pena on Thursday, while Young's service is scheduled for Friday.

Coming at the beginning of the holiday season, Bell strongly urged those in authority to lead, saying drunkenness is not the image he wants associated with being a soldier.

"Do not allow alcohol to diminish who you are, what you represent, and what you have accomplished," Bell wrote.

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Platoon loses its 'Sunshine' in Afghanistan

By KENT HARRIS

Stars and Stripes

VICENZA, Italy — The people gathered in the chapel at Caserma Ederle were told to think of Cpl. Matthew Steyart fishing from a small boat on a cold mountain lake — maybe something similar to the one on the cover of the program for Steyart's memorial service.

The American military community gathered Tuesday to mourn the 17th soldier from the Southern European Task Force (Airborne) killed in Afghanistan this year.

"If you are like me, after each memorial service, you pray that this community has seen its last fall soldier," said Capt. John McDougall in the commander's command section of the service.

Steyart, 21, grew up around Mount Shasta in northern California and was an avid outdoorsman, McDougall said. He loved to hunt and fish with his father.

Steyart, nicknamed "Sunshine" by his platoon, was killed by a roadside bomb Nov. 22 while on a mission.

Staff Sgt. Joseph Pier said Steyart was performing as he always did: committed and with a positive attitude.

"He showed to his leaders that he had what it took to accomplish the mission in Afghanistan," Pier said.

Steyart joined 1st Platoon, Company B, 1st Battalion, 508th Infantry Regiment shortly after the unit returned from a year's service in Iraq. He distinguished himself at military training areas in Hohenfels and Grafenwöhr in Germany, Pier said. He also helped his platoon win the first Red Devil Challenge, a battalion competition.

Pier said the platoon was taking the loss hard.

"You get to know people that you share a room with, that you sit down to a meal with, that you sit



KENT HARRIS/Stars and Stripes

Cpl. Matthew Steyart, 21, aspired to attend Ranger school. He was killed by a roadside bomb Nov. 22 in Afghanistan. The photograph shows a display that appeared at his memorial service in Vicenza, Italy.

down in a vehicle with, pulling 360-degree security," he said.

Steyart, who aspired to attend Ranger school after the unit returned to Vicenza, was always there for his platoon mates, Pier said.

"He would never let a comrade go without a smile," he said.

Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Doug Hudson said Steyart went to Afghanistan carrying the same copy of the Scriptures that his grandfather had during World War II.

Steyart is being recommended for the Bronze Star Medal. He is survived by his mother, Nancy; sisters Denise Lloyd and Cathy Tuggle; and brother Robert.

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Lieberman hopes for 2006-07 Iraq pullout

The Associated Press

Sen. Joseph Lieberman, D-Conn., told reporters Monday after his return from a visit to Iraq that he hoped U.S. forces could begin a significant withdrawal by late 2006 or early 2007.

That compares with the recent call by Rep. John Murtha, D-Pa., to begin a withdrawal immediately.

Lieberman, who arrived Wednesday in Baghdad to spend Thanksgiving with U.S. troops, told Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari that American forces will remain in Iraq until their mission is complete, despite growing unease in Congress about the conflict.

"We cannot let extremists and terrorists, a small number, here in Iraq deprive the 27 million Ira-

qis of what they want, which is a better freer life, safer life for themselves and their children," Lieberman said.

The Connecticut Democrat, a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said the cost of success in Iraq would be high "but the cost for America of failure in Iraq would be catastrophic — for America, for the Iraqi people and I believe for the world."

16 Marines killed in, by vehicles since Oct.

By JEFF SCHOGGL

Stars and Stripes

ARLINGTON, Va. — The Marines have seen a marked increase in the number of motor vehicle fatalities in the first few weeks of this fiscal year.

Sixteen Marines have been killed in motor vehicle incidents between Oct. 1 and Nov. 28, up from 11 fatalities during the same time period last fiscal year, according to the Naval Safety Center.

Of the Marines killed since Oct. 1, nine were killed in their own vehicles, four died on motorcycles, two were killed in military vehicles and one pedestrian was struck by a vehicle, according to the safety center.

Half of those killed were under the command of U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific, with three motorcycle deaths, three personnel vehicle deaths, one military vehicle death and one pedestrian death.

U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Atlantic has seen two personnel vehicle deaths, one motorcycle death and one military vehicle death; Headquarters Marine Corps, Mobilization Command, Training and Education Command and Marine Corps Combat Development Command each has seen one personnel vehicle death.

One fatal military vehicle crash happened in Iraq when a seven-ton truck rolled over, according to the safety center. They could not say to which command that Marine belonged.

A Marine Corps spokesman attributed the spike in deaths to the rash of motorcycle crashes and noted that overall, deaths involving motor vehicles have been decreasing for several years.

The Marines are looking into ways to emphasize motorcycle safety, such as forming motorcycle clubs on bases, the spokesman said.

No information was available Monday on whether alcohol or other factors may have played a role in the fatalities, the spokesman said.

Last year, seven Marines were killed in their own vehicles, one on a motorcycle and three in military vehicles, according to the safety center.

Of those, six Marines were under the command of U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific; three were under U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Atlantic; and two were under Marine Corps Combat Development Center, according to the safety center.

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Police probing Ramstein death of German contractor employee

By STEVE MRAZ

Stars and Stripes

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany — An employee of a German contractor died Monday evening at Ramstein Air Base, the apparent victim of an industrial accident.

German police said the victim was a 49-year-old male. U.S. Air Force officials at Ramstein are withholding the man's name pending notification of next of kin.

German police are handling the investigation because the victim was employed by a German contractor working at Ramstein.

The incident happened inside a warehouse about 4 p.m. Monday, according to a 63th Air Base Wing press release.

"The incident is under investigation," said Christine Lauterbach, a spokeswoman at German police headquarters at Ramstein.

"It seems the man tried to pull a wooden down, and he was caught between a handrail and a crossbeam."

German police are awaiting test results to determine if drugs or alcohol were present in the man's system.

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